

THE EARL OF
DOUGLAS: (W) K

A
DRAMATICK ESSAY.

By
MR. Francis Douglas of *Aberdeen.*

Ye Powers! what awful Changes often mark
The Fortunes of the Great—

THOMSON.

L O N D O N:

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TO HIS GRACE

ARCHIBALD

DUKE AND MARQUIS OF

DOUGLAS,

EARL OF ANGUS, &c. &c. &c.

The following ESSAY is humbly inscribed

By,

HIS GRACE'S

Most obedient, and

Most humble Servant

The AUTHOR.

To Mr Robert Boag,
from the Author.

ADVERTISEMENT.

SOME apology may be expected for publishing the following Essay, but the truth is, the writer knows of none that would much avail him. A warm feeling of the ungenerous treatment which the two noble youths met with, put him upon attempting something with a view to set their memory in a just light. He owns it was a rash attempt; nor will he dissemble that he soon had the mortification of finding himself unequal to the task.

THOSE who try it by the rules of the Drama, must bring in the author *guilty*, and he has only to plead in arrest of judgement, that as the main fact is strictly true, and most of the characters real, he chose rather to incur the censure of the critics, than to stretch historical facts beyond their due bounds.

THE unity of action he has endeavoured to preserve. The unities of time and place, agreed on all hands to be of less importance, are indeed broke through. The scenes that follow the murder of Lord Douglas, will appear to disadvantage, as after the grand catastrophe, the reader's mind, if in any degree affected, will be the less attentive to circumstances of smaller moment. The author was aware of this, but as they afforded opportunity for several useful moral reflexions, he took the liberty to add them. Perhaps some may think this little performance rather crowded with moral reflexions; the writer hopes they will, in general, be found just, and in character, and is of opinion, that it is a more pardonable error to exceed, than fall short in a decent regard to morality and religion.

THE placing a bull's head on the table before Lord Douglas, may appear an odd circumstance; and upon that very account the author adopted it. All the Scottish historians agree in the fact, and add, that in those days, this was understood to be the signal of immediate death; tho' none of them gives any account when, or upon what occasion, the custom was introduced.

He begs leave to observe, that the character he has drawn of Lord Douglas is by no means an ideal one. All the Scottish historians, notwithstanding the improbable things that many of them lay to his charge, allow him to have been a youth of great hopes, and an amiable disposition; and John Major, in point of veracity inferior to

none of them, expressly says, "*Apud annales legi, quod viri illi non erant rei mortis, sed quod consilio vel dolo Gulielmi Creichtoni Scotiæ Cancellarii hæc perpetrata sunt*"*

WITH regard to the characters of the two ministers, the writer hopes the descendants of neither will suspect him of having exaggerated matters; much less that he meant to compliment the living, at the expence of the dead; he knows well, that the virtues and vices of men are personal. To boast of the virtues of our ancestors is ridiculous vanity; to vindicate their faults is extremely absurd.

If it be objected, that the author has in some places made the ministers speak too feelingly of virtue and morality; let it be considered, that both were deep dissemblers, and that the greatest appearance of zeal for virtue and the concerns of the publick, was necessary to impose upon the States, and to succeed in their design against Lord Douglas. He has conformable to history, represented the one as the first mover, who without check or remorse went through every scene of that tragedy; the other, as acting more by the immediate influence of his own fears, and the artful persuasions of the Chancellor, than from any premeditated malicious design.

THOUGH the author has put his thoughts into a kind of blank verse, he disclaims all pretensions to the title of a poet; not from an affected modesty, that others may think the better of him or his performance; but

* Rapin, misled by Buchanan's general censure, gives an unfavourable idea of this Earl of Douglas. But his tender age—the short time he had been possessed of the estate—the above quoted testimony of one of the best Scottish historians—the vague manner in which Buchanan, and after him some other historians, censure his conduct——the views and characters of the two ministers—and above all, that generous confidence he expressed by putting himself, his only brother, and his dearest friend into their power, prove beyond a doubt, that he was first destroyed to perpetuate their weak and arbitrary government, and his character afterwards misrepresented, to lessen that horror which every good mind must have felt, on hearing of so nefarious a murder. Buchanan neither condemns this horrid fact, nor says a word of the tender age of Lord Douglas or his brother——Could this be to check the humane tear of after ages?——Rapin, or his Translator, (for I have not the original by me) makes Lady Beatrix the daughter of this Earl of Douglas, and calls Lord Abercorn his brother; tho' the one was his sister, the other his uncle, or father's brother.

but from a real conviction that a man, to merit that character, must have many qualities which the writer of this finds not in himself.

He has only to add, to indulge the curiosity of those who may not have a history of Scotland at their hand, that Lord Douglas succeeded his father, Archibald Earl of Douglas and Duke of Touraine, in the year 1438, and was murdered in or about the year 1440, when scarce ~~16~~ 16 years of age. His brother, Lord David, was then in his 10th or 11th year. Douglas, Lord Abercorn succeeded to the honours, and the entailed estate; and his eldest son Lord William, by marrying Lady Beatrix, became possessed of the whole fortune of the family.

Dra-

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

- The *KING*. JAMES, the second of *Scotland*.
DOUGLAS. WILLIAM, the sixth Earl of DOUGLAS, and third Duke of TOWN-RAINE, about sixteen years of age.
Lord *DAVID*. His brother, about ten years of age.
LIVINGSTON. SIR ALEXANDER LIVINGSTON, Regent of *Scotland*.
CRICHTON. SIR WILLIAM CRICHTON, Chancellor of *Scotland*.
ANGUS. DOUGLAS Earl of ANGUS.
Lord *WILLIAM*. Eldest son of DOUGLAS Lord ABERCORN.
FLEMING. SIR MALCOLM FLEMING of CUMBERNAULD, friend to DOUGLAS.
GRAME. An old Gentleman related to DOUGLAS.
LENOX. A Gentleman belonging to DOUGLAS.
MACKRAE. Chaplain to the Chancellor.
MONTEITH. A Creature of the Regent's.

W O M E N.

- Lady *BEATRIX*. Sister to DOUGLAS.
Lady *LIVINGSTON*. Spouse to the Regent.
Mother *KIRKTON*. A pretended fortune-teller.

Officer, Guards, and Servants.

SCENE,

Edinburgh, Douglas-Castle, and Crichton-Castle.

THE

THE
EARL of DOUGLAS,
A DRAMATICK ESSAY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Room off the Parliament House in Edinburgh.

LIVINGSTON *solus.*

THE Chancellor and I, once more are friends—
Can friendship stand which is not built on virtue?
No: say the moralists—then ours must fall;
The mutual trust, the corresponding passions,
Requir'd in friendship, center not in us.
He cannot bear a rival—I disdain
The thought of parity in place or pow'r.
Such are our views—Our factions nearly equal,
Divide the State—should Douglas join with either,
His weight would in a moment turn the scale.
He loves not me—To guard against the worst,
I think, the gravest casuist must allow
A just precaution—How the world mistakes!
To its misjudging eye the great seem happy:
What numbers envy me, and vainly think,
The place I hold would make them amply so—
They know thee not Ambition!—to indulge
Is but to whet thine appetite the more—
Happy the humble swain! who views his fields
With verdure clad; who sees his flocks encrease;

His children rise to ease the load of life;
And only hopes for daily bread and peace.
The day in healthful exercise employ'd,
Adds charms to night; an undisturb'd repose
Refits him for the labours of to-morrow;
Refresh'd he rises with the early dawn,
And to his wonted labour chearly goes;
Th' encreasing light, the sun's enliv'ning ray,
Inspire his soul with gratitude and joy;
Happy, if the long labours of the year,
Supply the small demands that nature makes!—
How blest is such a state compar'd to mine!—
Why did the States confer these trusts on men,
Whose equal thirst for rule makes them unfit
To act in concert?—Could they see our hearts?—
Why rather did we then, why still assume
Of Virtue and Humility the semblance?—
All would be happy—That's the general aim
Of ev'ry action, and of each resolve—
O that my eye could pierce the cloud that hangs
With low'ring aspect on my future days!—
If in the book of fate success be wrote,
To see the page would be the balm of life;
Evil fore-seen, fore-known, were good, compar'd
To that which preys upon the anxious mind—
I've heard much of a woman, old and wise,
For knowledge of the future greatly fam'd—
Suppose I sent for her—no: 'twere a meanness,
And known, would lay me open to reproach—
Suppose, I like a servant went disguis'd—
Still that were mean—'twere folly, shameful weakness!
I'll think of it no more!—The Chancellor comes!—

SCENE II.

CRICHTON, LIVINGSTON.

CRICHTON.

MY good Lord Governour! methinks the sun
Shines brighter, now that we are friends again.

LIVINGSTON.

Long may the friendship last, which to my soul
Gives real joy, and makes the cares of state
Seem an amusement, rather than a toil.

CRICHTON.

Have you with due attention thought of that,
Last night propos'd, to hold us one forever?

LIVINGSTON.

I have my Lord. The world would blame the deed.

CRICHTON.

Perhaps it might: what then? so does it oft
Things worthy commendation. Till that house
Be humbled, and its dangerous pow'r abridg'd
The person of the King's not safe, the State secure,
Nor can we call our property our own.
For your concerns and mine, what need I say
How much we have to fear? These tho' but trifles,
When with the publick-good compar'd, deserve
Our second care.

LIVINGSTON.

I own they do, my Lord.

That he's a dangerous person to the State,
I freely grant; but his untivall'd power,
Might turn what we intended as a remedy,
To rankest poison. True he loves us not:

But were he thus confin'd, the giddy mob,
 Who right or wrong, are on the suffering side.
 Would take his part against us; from his friends,
 His powerful friends, what have we not to fear?

CRICHTON.

Nothing at all my Lord: bring down the head,
 The body falls of course. Secure the chief,
 And terror dissipates the slavish crowd.
 Have you forgot the rancour which his father
 Express'd to both of us? With what contempt
 He look'd upon us from his height of greatness?

LIVINGSTON.

I never can, my Lord.

CRICHTON.

And will the son,
 Of such a father, ever be our friend?
 No, no my Lord, that pow'r you seem to dread,
 Grows daily stronger, and will soon exert
 Its utmost force to crush the State and us.
 Admit there's danger—the determin'd mind,
 Thinks not of danger, till the great attempt
 It meditates be o'er. Our all's at stake—
 What tho' the musty moralist may blame?
 Success will always vindicate the means.
 If we pursue the plan I pointed out,
 My head shall answer for the wish'd success!

LIVINGSTON.

Give me your hand, my Lord! at all events
 I follow where you lead.

CRICHTON.

Henceforth my Lord,
 Our friends, our foes, our interests are the same.

Enter an Usher.

USHER.

My lords, the States in full convention wait
Your entry to the house.

LIVINGSTON.

'Tis well, we come.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E III.

The Parliament.

LIVINGSTON, CRICHTON, ANGUS, &c.

LIVINGSTON.

MY lords, it gives me pain to hint the cause
Of our assembling here; the fell disease
That preys upon the vitals of the State,
Demands an instant cure; too long delay'd,
The spreading evil baffles human skill.
The laws condemn'd, authority despis'd,
Wild Anarchy with hasty step comes on.
Oppression, like a hideous monster, stalks
Relentless through the land. Hard on his heels,
Unpitying Murder reeks with human gore,
Nor fears, nor shuns the sacred light of heav'n.
Pale Misery and weeping Sorrow plead,
They cannot plead in vain——The helpless poor
Have no resource, my lords, but heav'n and you.
Alas! that man, whose debt to social love
Can never be repaid, so soon forgets
How much he owes, and what he daily needs:

Helpless and weak he comes into the world,
And taught by nature, cries aloud for pity;
Were this deny'd, the noble plant must feel
The bitter frosts of life, and quickly die.
Rear'd by the care of others, up it shoots
To youth, to manhood, the supporting hand
Mean while declining, soon requires the aid
It kindly lent, which horrible to tell!
Is frequently refus'd——Ingrateful man!
To moralize is vain——some sharper remedy
Must be apply'd to the distemper'd State;
But how, or where begin, that is the question?
A question which deserves the last regard.
To me my lords, it seems as clear as noon,
Those instruments of mischief are set on
By some, who envious of their country's peace,
Desire to plunge it in intestine broils;
By some, whose eminence and pow'r give hopes
Of impious protection from the laws.
But who are these?—This is a straining question,
And few perhaps, will chuse to answer it.
For me I know not——Some indeed have said,
“ The young Lord Douglas, with the court disgusted,
“ Vain of excessive pow'r, and green in years,
“ Protects those miscreants, and contemns the laws.
“ The violation of each social duty,
“ Connives at in his followers, and presumes
“ None dare to call amiss what he approves.”
Perhaps the noble youth, with gentle hand,
And pitying eye, corrects the faults of some;
Perhaps, beset with flatterers, he presumes
Too much upon his pow'r, and screens a few,

For leſſer crimes obnoxious to the law.
 But that a princely youth, to virtue train'd,
 Would harbour thieves, and murderers, and robbers,
 Believe who liſt, no credence I can give it.
 Tho' this is my opinion, I preſume not
 To ſay the charge is abſolutely falſe.
 In times like theſe, the ſtrangeſt things fall out;
 And men ſucceed not to their fathers virtues.
 I hope the noble Lord can clear himſelf;
 But were he guilty, ſhould he even reſuſe
 To ſtand the teſt of law; would it be prudent
 To make a publick breach with him? His pow'r,
 The numbers he can raiſe, his tow'ring ſpirit
 Impatient of reſtraint, might throw the State
 In terrible convulſions. Let me then
 Humbly propoſe, a letter from the States
 Be ſent Lord Douglas, to intreat his aid,
 His perſonal attendance, and advice.
 Leſt ſome about him ſhould with ill deſign
 Inſtil diſtruſt, and fill with doubts and fears
 His generous mind, I think, the States ſhould give
 Security to overlook the ſlips
 The warmth of youthful blood may have occaſion'd.
 Thus far, my lords——

CRICHTON.

The motion I do ſecond,
 As equitable in itſelf, and tending
 So greatly to the honour of the State.
 For if the noble Lord be innocent,
 As poſſibly he may, by this the world
 Will be convinc'd, we wiſh to find him ſo.

If youth and inexperience have occasion'd
 Some trivial deviations from his duty,
 The moderation of the States may gain him
 To love of virtue, and the publick-good.
 This just respect the publick owes his house,
 Whose great exploits have oft struct envy dumb,
 Spread terror in the hearts of Scotland's foes,
 And made their chiefs, inglorious quit the field.
 When Edward's hostile arms threw down the bounds
 Of antient right, and trampled on our laws;
 When broke by factions, and by numbers aw'd,
 Our fathers recogniz'd his galling yoke;
 Fair Liberty, with mien dejected, stood
 To Douglas' eye reveal'd—he greatly rose,
 And singly dar'd to vindicate her claim.
 Stript of his wide domains, torn from his friends,
 Coop'd in the narrow limits of a jail;
 Supported by the Liberty he lov'd,
 Nor chains, nor death, could move the hero's soul!
 Methinks I see the God-like man stretch'd out
 Upon the narrow couch, lift up his head,
 Collect the small remains of life, and dart
 To heav'n his last kind wish for Scotland's peace;
 Smile in the hope, his wish acceptance found,
 Then greatly die! undaunted, unsubstu'd! *

LIVINGSTON.

Just is the praise, tho' great, you have bestow'd
 On the illustrious chief——To what we mov'd
 Do any here object?——My Lord of Angus?—

ANGUS.

The motion has my hearty approbation.

* See the Note at the end.

(a pause)

LIVINGSTON.

Since all agree, my lords, I humbly move,
This letter may be sent before the house
Proceeds to other business. If the terms
I hinted, be your mind, whom you appoint,
May write my Lord of Douglas, in your name.

CRICHTON.

On you my Lord, I humbly think, the States
Will put the trouble.

ANGUS.

None so fit my Lord.

(a pause)

LIVINGSTON.

This day, my lords, the letter shall be sent;
Mean time, the parliament may be adjourn'd.

[*Exeunt.*

The End of the first ACT.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Douglas - Castle.

DOUGLAS, FLEMING.

FLEMING, (*delivering a Letter*)A PACKET from the States—
DOUGLAS.

Pray open it.

FLEMING, (*reads*)

My LORD of DOUGLAS,

YOU have been accused of conniving at several acts of oppression in your dependants, and of protecting others who are obnoxious to the laws. But as these complaints seemed to be founded on vague and uncertain reports, the States have dismiss'd them. It however gives them just concern, that your illustrious house should lie under such foul aspersions; and they earnestly desire your attendance in parliament, as soon as the conveniency of your affairs will permit. The publick disorders that too generally prevail, call aloud for the assistance of every lover of his country; and the States cannot doubt of my Lord of Douglas's readiness to join in every measure for the publick good. That you may have no room to distrust their good intentions, the States hereby engage the publick faith for your absolute security, and promise to overlook whatever may have been amiss in your conduct hitherto. Signed in name, and by appointment of the Estates of Scotland, by

ALEXANDER LIVINGSTON *Regent.*

Thus far the States—

DOUGLAS.

Methinks 'tis hard my friend,

At once to bear the envy of the great,
And the reproach of low malicious tongues.
I charge you on our friendship, speak the truth,
Has ever my protection been abus'd

To shelter ro— or stop the course of law?
 Have any that end on me been screen'd
 From publick justice? Or have I indulg'd
 The breach of social duty?

FLEMING.

I aver,
 The man that says it greatly dares truth,
 And dares not shew his face to make it good.

DOUGLAS.

At least, my heart acquits me of designs
 To honour so repugnant. But 'tis strange
 The authors of such false reports should dare
 To shew their heads before th' assembled States
 Where truth and justice should preside.

FLEMING.

These false reports inoutriously are spread,
 By whom, for what intent, I will not say.
 Whatever grudge the ministers might owe
 Your noble father, him they dread no more;
 He would exert his antient right, and judge
 Within his jurisdiction, be the cause
 Such as to common royalties belong,
 Or such as seem'd above a subject's sphere.
 This gave offence—But since his death, my Lord,
 No case hath happ'ned, which the meanest Baron
 Has not an ample pow'r to have decided.

DOUGLAS.

The ministers appear to be my friends;
 Nor have they list'ned with a willing ear
 To these injurious tales; they would not else
 Have kindly broke a blade by malice forg'd

C

To wound me in the tend'rest part.

FLEMING.

This favour, in the scale of justice laid,

A down outweighs: they only did you right.

To me, their difference with my Lord your father—

DOUGLAS.

That gave me pain, and had an ill effect.

I neither will condemn; tho' yet I own,

He seem'd to treat them with too much contempt.

Whate'er the men, the offices they hold,

From highest subjects claim a just respect.

Their families, compar'd with some, are new;

What then? In the impartial eye of reason,

The accidents of birth and fortune weigh not.

The man, who treading in the paths of virtue,

Can raise a name, or fortune to himself,

May look with just contempt on him, who boasts

His birth-right-titles, and his father's worth.

FLEMING.

'Tis greatly said my Lord! a generous soul

Will never boast of what it owes to chance.

Perhaps my Lord on some occasions shew'd

Too warm resentment of the wrongs he bore;

Was he alone to blame? The world allows,

He knew the men, and judg'd of them aright.

DOUGLAS.

Here let their quarrels rest. Should we consult

Our cousin Grame, before we write the Regent?

FLEMING.

compliment, which to his worth

is justly due.

DOUGLAS.

Take care my friend,
The messenger be fitly entertain'd.

[Exit, Fleming.]

DOUGLAS, *solus*.

Would I had been an humble cottager,
Below the eye of this malicious world!
Plenty, with liberal hand my board supplies,
And wide domains acknowledge me their Lord;
Meantime the noxious breath of envy blasts
The tender shoots, I vainly hop'd to raise
From honour's root—An honest fame hath charms
The strictest virtue needs not blush to court;
And he that coolly hears his fame arraign'd,
Must know himself a villain— (*going, meets Grame*)

S C E N E II.

DOUGLAS, GRAME.

DOUGLAS.

COUSIN Grame,
You meet me opportunely on the way
To call upon you. Look at this (*giving a letter*) and give
Your sentiments upon it, as a friend.

(*a pause, while Grame reads the letter*)

GRAME.

I like it not, my Lord: the stile is good,
But I suspect the meaning is not fair.

DOUGLAS.

What answer do you think we should return?

GRAME.

Your thanks, my Lord, for having done you right.

DOUGLAS

That compliment would hardly pass at Court.
Should we attend the meeting of the States?

GRAME.

As matters stand, you'll give me leave to say,
I should not think it prudent: no my Lord,
The King's a child, the ministers who rule
Him and the State, the en'mies of your house.

DOUGLAS.

I know you love them not. Your prejudice
Leads you to think amiss of all they do.

GRAME.

My Lord, a long experience hath taught me,
To question the sincerity of him,
Who from an open enemy, assumes
The specious mask of friendship; and the more
If the transition's sudden and unlook'd for.

DOUGLAS.

But why, my cousin, view them in that light?
If stricter union 'twixt us can promote
The publick good, soon may it come about.

GRAME.

Perhaps, my Lord, they use the publick good,
But as a cloak to cover bad designs.
Did they indeed regard the common-weal,
Could their regards be local? Would they bear
Oppression, murder, ev'ry vice to reign
Without controul in one place, while in others,
The vague complaints of nameless wretches drew
Their whole attention? Is not this the case?

What corner of the country hath not felt
The dire effects of their unseemly discord?
To-day a proclamation strictly chargeth,
That none regard the orders of the Regent,
But ere to morrow's sun goes down, another
Flies in the face of that, and bids obey him.
To whom can men, in such a case apply
For justice and protection? If to either,
The other's faction takes a quick revenge,
And ruins those, before but half undone.
What heart but shudders at the barbarous acts
Committed by the western islanders?
Yet not a word of this in parliament——
Whole counties to the capital repair'd,
To lay their grievances before the States;
But all was hush when the assembly met,
Except Lord Douglas, not a soul accus'd.
I own, such partial dealing's make me fear,
That ill designs are form'd against your house.
As yet, my Lord, you're young, and know not men:
It grieves my soul to think how few are honest!
The mind that's conscious of its own regard
To truth and justice, and hath never felt
The ill effects of perfidy in others,
Is ever apt to think too well of man,

DOUGLAS,

Perhaps so cousin: nor is it strange if those
Imbitt'ed by the villainy of some,
From thence, conclude too harshly of the whole,
Forgive me, cousin, if I cannot see
The matter in the light you take it up.
What have I done, that I should fear to meet

Th' assembled States? Where is the man that doubt
 The publick faith? On this I rest secure.
 Should I decline to go, they might conclude,
 That consciousness of guilt had kept me back.
 To-morrow we set out. Would you were able
 To bear us company, that as in private,
 In publick we might shew the just regard,
 To age and virtue.

GRAME. (*wiping his eyes*)

I have done my Lord—

Heav'n grant a prosperous issue to your journey!—
 Forgive the weakness of a poor old man—
 These eyes were dim ere yours had seen the light—
 Soft was the scene when they beheld you first,
 A smiling infant in the nurse's lap:
 The good Lord Douglas took you in his arms,
 Twice kist your rosy lips, then smiling said,
 "Grame! love thy little cousin—and take care,
 "If thou surviv'st me, to make up his loss.
 "Thou know'st the dangerous course he has to steer,
 "Upon the shelly coast of human life—
 "Point out the rocks, in pity to thy friend."
 I've done my duty, if my heart says true;
 And can no more—my friend deserv'd a tear—
 I thought this moisture dried, with age and grief,
 But find it runs apace—a little longer,—
 And age, and pain, and sorrow are no more!

DOUGLAS.

My father! and my friend! the kind regard
 Tell, I shew, deserves, and has my grateful thanks;
 There's no way to these unkind suspicions,
 Save hence, we'll laugh at them together.

GRAME.

rant we may! for till we meet again,
easy moment I can ne'er enjoy.

[Exit Grame.]

S C E N E III.

DOUGLAS, Lord WILLIAM.

Lord WILLIAM.

METHOUGHT I saw our cousin Grame go out,
With an unusual gloom upon his face.

DOUGLAS.

I have a letter from the States, the answer
Which I intend, suits not with his opinion.

Lord WILLIAM.

Sir Malcom hath inform'd me of the letter,
Who greatly doubts, it does not mean you good.

DOUGLAS.

To me 'tis strange, that men of sense and worth,
Should draw conclusions so remote, and doubt
The publick faith. I wish they had approv'd
My resolution; but cannot recede
From what my conscience tells me is my duty,
Because my friends fore-see some danger in it.
'Tis ours to do our duty; heav'n alone
Fore-knows the issue; and will ne'er forsake
The man whose views the laws of virtue bound.
It is resolv'd: to morrow we set out;
Two friends, and servants, only in our train

Lord WILLIAM.

humbly think, my Lord, the number

I dare no doubt the publick faith; but still
 Our cousin Gram's experience of the world
 His knowledge of the men; his love to you,
 Perplex me not a little. At least permit
 An hundred horse to go; so small a train
 Can never give offence.

DOUGLAS.

Forgive me, cousin,
 A smaller number, to the squinting eye
 Of malice, would appear the sign of guilt.
 I mean to shew the world, my views are just,
 And that my deeds can bear the test of law.
 No more a large retinue can impart
 A dignity to man, than gaudy dress
 Worth to his mind, or to his body health.

LORD WILLIAM.

May I not hope the honour to attend you?

DOUGLAS.

You know my just regard, but give me leave
 To beg that you insist not in a suit,
 I cannot grant. None of my house, or name,
 On this occasion goes with me to court,
 Except my brother. It will give me joy,
 To see you there soon after; but till once
 My character is clear'd, those vile reports
 Prov'd false and groundless, I will ne'er assume
 The state, which to my birth and house belongs.

LORD WILLIAM.

insist not; but shall follow soon,
 the pleasure. which your heart must

On fame restor'd, and innocence approv'd.

SCENE IV.

Lady BEATRIX, DOUGLAS,

Lord WILLIAM.

Lady BEATRIX.

MY Lord, you have a letter from the States,
I come to give you joy. No more your fame
Shall vilely be traduc'd; as silver tried,
Your character must brighter shine; your foes
By truth's superior lustre dash'd must hide
Their dastard heads. The conduct of the States
Does honour to themselves, and right to you.

DOUGLAS.

It does, my sister; yet our friends have drawn
Such strange conclusions——

Lady BEATRIX.

Fleming seems to doubt
The honour of the States. For me, my Lord,
I cannot think so ill of human kind:
It is not come to that: however loose
The principles of some, the publick faith
Is sacred deem'd by all.

DOUGLAS.

Your sentiments

And mine exactly correspond: to me
No ground of doubt appears: I would not live,
Suspected of the crimes, the busy world

D

Lays falsely to my charge.

Lady BEATRIX.

'Tis yours, my Lord,
To wipe such foul aspersions off your house;
'Tis yours, to drag those miscreants into light,
Who hid in darkness, shoot their poison'd shafts,
To wound your rising fame. But still my Lord,
Let prudence be your guide; weigh, coolly weigh,
Whate'er your more experienc'd friends have said.

DOUGLAS.

Our cousin Grame and I have duly weigh'd
Their grounds of doubt: meantime I must dispatch
My answer to the States. [Exit.

Lord WILLIAM.

'Tis not in man
To 'scape the censure of a busy world:
But injur'd innocence, at last shall shine
Refulgent through the mist by envy rais'd.
[Exeunt.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Edinburgh - Castle.

LIVINGSTON, *solus.* (*a letter in his hand*)

SUCCESS already dawns upon our plan,
To-day my Lord of Douglas comes to town,
To clear his fame--The Chancellor gone to meet him,
'Tis very grating thus to be oblig'd
To act in concert, with the man I hate—
Perhaps he has a double view, and hopes
To rid himself of me—Douglas to each

Bears equal grudge, and keeps us both in awe.
 Well pleas'd he saw us quarrel and lay by
 To wait the issue—Had the one been foil'd,
 The other must have fall'n his easy prey——
 We saw his aim; on this our union's built——
 Were Douglas once remov'd, each for himself,
 And we are friends no more——It must be so——
 Cool, politick, and artful, he assumes
 Each character with ease, in all the same:
 With penetrating eye explores the views
 Of others, deeper than the depths his own——
 Well! foxes may be caught——'Tis near the hour
 I was to be with Kirkton——She fore-told
 The murder of the King, if fame says true.
 Crowds daily throng her house, and none dispute
 The truth of her predictions——Yet 'tis strange!
 To reason's eye she seems an artful cheat——
 But then experience says, I reason wrong——
 It must be so—She's old, and long ere now
 Had been detected——Me she cannot know——
 I'll strictly mark her words, if they import
 Superior wisdom, she shall be my guide.

S C E N E II.

LIVINGSTON, ANGUS.

LIVINGSTON.

WELCOME my Lord of Angus! you'll rejoice
 To hear the Earl of Douglas comes to town.

ANGUS.

I do indeed, my Lord, and hope your motion

Will have the good effect you had in view.

LIVINGSTON.

Perhaps it may, my Lord; tho' some advices
Since come to town, set Douglas in a light
Which shews I was mistak'n; his designs
Are deeper laid, than from his time of life,
I could have thought of. Ev'ry prudent man
Must first be tried; but should he still persist
In those illegal courses, and despise
The friendly admonitions of the States,
I own, I'm difficulted how to act.

ANGUS.

Should it appear, that his designs but glance
Upon the State; tho' of his name, and house,
My interest and my sword shall be against him,
The publick-good at stake, each private tie
Must be forgot.

LIVINGSTON.

'Tis greatly said my Lord!

But should the States impeach him of his crimes,
Of course a trial follows—Ev'ry where
The lawless and abandon'd are his friends.

ANGUS.

The States, my Lord, can only do their duty,
And leave th' event to heav'n.

LIVINGSTON.

This I admit,

But then, the servants of the Crown must still
Have in their eye the safety of the whole,
And, if on some occasions they abridge
The tedious forms of law, the end in view,
I think, should give a sanction to their act.

ANGUS.

My Lord, I understand you not!—The law
In its minutest forms should be observ'd!
It is our life, our liberty, our all.

LIVINGSTON.

How oft my Lord, hath liberty been hurt
By a punctilious zeal for forms, at first
Intended to secure it? Human laws
Must ever share the weakness of their authors—

ANGUS.

My Lord, excuse me: Whither tends your speech?

LIVINGSTON.

Only to shew, that should my Lord of Douglas
By prudent measures be restrain'd, the State
Secur'd from the designs he has against it,
Some forms may be dispens'd with, which gone through
Might be th' occasion of a greater ill,
Than that we meant to cure.

ANGUS.

Perhaps they might.

I am not skill'd in politicks, my Lord,
Nor do I love them, when they interfere
With plain and open dealing. Virtue's bold,
And never fears to meet the greatest odds,
Always secure of heav'n upon its side.

LIVINGSTON.

Your sentiments, my Lord, so truly great,
Admit of no reply—May heav'n prevent
My fears, and order all things for the best.
Lord Angus will excuse me—an appointment—

ANGUS.

Make no apology, nor let me hinder

Your more important business.

LIVINGSTON.

My Lord!—[Exit.]

ANGUS, *solus*.

If I mistake not much the Regent's aim,
He meant to draw me in to some design,
He has in view against my Lord of Douglas—
His speech in parliament, so smooth, so artful,
Made me indeed believe he was his friend—
'Tis well the States are met; he will not dare
To question the indemnity they gave—
Perhaps I wrong him—statesmen oft affect
To talk ambiguously—I must however,
Put Douglas, and his friends upon their guard.

[Exit.]

SCENE III.

Mother Kirkton's House.

LIVINGSTON. (*disguised as a servant*)

I WISH this creature had not been at home,
I blush to know my self—But hush! she comes—

Enter Kirkton.

Mother, I come to have my fortune told;
But first accept your fee—(*gives money*)

KIRKTON.

Shew me your hand—

If I mistake not, fortune is your friend,
Your master generous, your appointments large—
Distrust and envy, lately have produc'd
Unseemly quarrels 'twixt you and a man

Whom now you call your friend—He loves you not.

LIVINGSTON.

Shall he prevail against me?

KIRKTON.

That depends

Much on yourself—Ambition leads you on—

She is a dangerous guide—Beware a Douglas!

LIVINGSTON.

That's to the point indeed! (*aside*) Why of a Douglas?

KIRKTON.

No more!—Thou know'st if the advice concerns thee.

LIVINGSTON.

Be more explicit mother——double fee——

KIRKTON.

In vain thou urgest—In the womb of time

Deep hid the rest remains—Enough to thee

Be virtuous, and be happy—Ask no more!

(*Exit Livingston.*)

KIRKTON, *sola.*

'Tis strange a man of sense should weakly think

A poor illiterate woman can unfold

The dark recesses of futurity!

How strange! that he, who, conscious of his crimes,

With reason dreads the future, should attempt

To draw aside the curtain which divides

'Twixt guilt and punishment—The soul unblest,

Which dares not turn its eyes upon itself,

Incessant roams through folly's ample field,

In quest of happiness, till tir'd and spent,

It droops and owns the foreign pursuit vain.

(*Exit.*)

The End of the third ACT.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Crichton - Castle.

LENOX, FLEMING.

LENOX.

I LIKE it not fir Malcom—ten to one,
 These over-courtesies are only meant
 To hide a hollow heart.

FLEMING.

The generous youth
 Unpractis'd in deceit, receives as gold,
 Th' adult'rate coin they spread before his eyes.
 And much I doubt, our joint attempts will fail,
 To save him from the snare we justly dread.

LENOX.

We must endeavour it, whate'er the issue,
 We cannot, must not, see him blindly run
 In such a dangerous path—Admit we fail,
 Our conscience will acquit us. I have mark'd
 The countenance of the Chancellor, and can see
 He loves him not——Scarce has an hour elaps'd
 Since we were here, but messengers have past
 From hence to town—Some dark design's in view,
 May heav'n disappoint it!

FLEMING.

Have you mark'd,
 With what assiduous care he tends my Lord?

LENOX.

I have. In ev'ry different point of view

The danger heightens, and my doubts encrease.
 'Tis true their honour, and the publick faith,
 Are both engag'd; but what are these to men,
 Who practis'd in deceit, can coolly act,
 As faith and virtue were but empty names;
 Religion, but a bug-bear of the State,
 To frighten fools, and keep the world in awe.
 Oaths or engagements cannot bind the man,
 Of pow'r possest, who holds religion cheap.

FLEMING.

The observation's just. Tho' laws are made
 The vicious to restrain, the good alone,
 Regard them in their moral view, and yield
 Obedience, where they safely might transgress.
 Yonder he comes—The Chancellor with him still!
 Let us retire to think upon the means,
 That prudence my suggest to 'scape the snare.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

CRICHTON, DOUGLAS.

CRICHTON.

INDEED my Lord, you set an overvalue
 On this poor instance of our just respect.

DOUGLAS.

The States, my Lord, by this their act have shown—

CRICHTON.

No compliments!—What could the States do less?
 The great, my Lord, have always been abus'd,
 By sanguine tempers and licentious tongues;

E

Such, with a wicked pleasure, watch their steps,
 Abroad, at home, not privy can screen
 From the malignant glance of envy's eye.
 In popular assemblies still we find
 Weak men, who sway'd by vulgar prejudice,
 Can swallow ev'ry tale by malice whisper'd,
 To hurt them, in the publick estimation.
 Such think not for themselves, but blindly plunge
 Into the stream of error; those who see,
 And know their danger, should in pity lend
 Their hand, to help them out—We did no more.

DOUGLAS.

My Lord, your conduct is an ample proof,
 That you adopt this generous sentiment.

CRICHTON.

My Lord, your servant!—Flatt'ry is a vice
 My soul detests: yet give me leave to say,
 The house of Douglas merits the respect
 The States have shown it.

DOUGLAS.

If it shall appear,

That I, or mine, by accident have wrong'd
 The meanest subject in his right, or giv'n
 Protection to the miscreant who did;
 An ample satisfaction shall be made.
 I reverence the laws: let him stand forth
 Who says I wrong'd him; humbly I'll reply,
 Conscious that justice will decide between us,
 And give to each his due. While heav'n permits
 My heart to beat, I firmly mean to act
 To others, as I wish they would to me.
 The honour of my country, and my King,

Shall, like a precious jewel, always hang
Next to my heart, and to my soul be dear.

CRICHTON.

Such noble sentiments confirm the hopes
Your character inspir'd. While thus you act,
The Sov'reign's just respect, the subjects love,
And what exceeds them both, a heart approv'd,
Will be the happy issue; this, my Lord,
Is an ambition worthy of your birth.
My lord the Regent, much your friend my Lord,
And I, had waited of you long ere now,
But that we were advis'd great art was us'd,
To make you look upon us as your foes.

DOUGLAS.

I must confess, that some about me strove
To keep us still assunder, and to give
Impressions, which I could not think were just.

CRICHTON.

It cannot be deny'd, your noble father
Upon the justest grounds was discontent:
He saw the first, the most distinguish'd trusts,
Conferr'd on men in all respects below him;
Himself neglected, tho' his rank, his parts,
His virtue and experience gave a title,
Which factious envy only could dispute.
The States, my Lord, whate'er their motive was,
Conferr'd those offices on us, unask'd.
Perhaps as they put by my Lord of Douglas,
The more to shew their pow'r, thy fix'd on men,
Whose humble views could never have aspir'd
To such distinguish'd rank, and sacred trust,

The never-ceasing toils, the restless nights,
Which statesmen must put up with, were they known,
Would melt the heart of envy into pity.
A temporary pow'r, a local title,
Too dear are purchas'd! Would that I had spurn'd
The shining baubles, and liv'd retir'd, in peace.

DOUGLAS.

The offices you bear, are so essential
To order, to the publick-good, that some
Must needs have bore them. Providence hath mix'd
In human life the bitter with the sweet :
My Lord, I mean not, that a sounding title,
Appointments and precedence are rewards,
Proportion'd to the weighty cares of State,
These, tho' the food of envy, cannot charm
A generous spirit, conscious of its worth.
To stay the proud oppressor's hand ; to raise
Declining virtue ; to preserve the State
From foreign bondage, and intestine broils ;
To chear the orphan, and make glad the heart
Of humble poverty ; are acts of pow'r,
Which shed a pleasing influence on the soul.

CRICHTON.

I grant they are. But where's the man can promise,
A happy issue to the best designs?
A thousand accidents may intervene,
To render his attempts to serve the State
Abortive, and himself the game of fools.
I say not this, with an intent to check
That strong propensity to serve the publick,
For which your house hath ever been distinguish'd,
How base were that!—It is a generous flame

Which warms the patriot's breast: his ample heart,
Expanded wide, in holy union holds
The happiness of myriads yet unborn,
Connected with his own.

DOUGLAS.

As yet, my Lord,
The cool experience, the superior skill,
Th' extensive knowledge both of men and things,
Requir'd to fit a man for publick life,
Are not in me. Long may the State be serv'd,
By men whose parts are equal to their trust.

CRICHTON.

A modest diffidence hath ever been
The sign of genuine worth: in youth it charms,
Nor less delights in age. Experience adds
A weight to counsel, and a grace to virtue;
Thus far it may, but years can never give,
What nature has deny'd—Your friend my Lord.

[Exit Crichton.]

SCENE III.

FLEMING, DOUGLAS.

FLEMING.

MY Lord, the time permits not long discourse,
Nor formal introduction; there's a snare
Spread for your life or freedom; to proceed
Upon this journey I aver unsafe.

DOUGLAS.

By whom sir Malcom!—Circumstances strong,
Must guide your judgment ere you thus could speak.

FLEMING.

The Chancellor is not your friend: his eye
 Speaks plainly out the rancour of his heart.
 The eye's allow'd the index of the soul,
 And often shews the wicked heart within.
 His strain'd respect and complaisance, are meant
 But to deceive. Express upon express
 Have been dispatch'd, since ever you were here——

DOUGLAS.

Are these the circumstances whence you draw
 Conclusions so remote? I've heard that lovers
 Construe the meaning of their mistress's eyes,
 As vanity suggests. 'Tis strange my friend!
 Your reason does not check such idle fears;
 Expresses pass to town——And may they not,
 On many just occasions, which to us
 Bear no relation? Must the wheels of State
 Stand still in compliment, till I am gone?

FLEMING.

The Chancellor has watch'd you like a child,
 Since you arriv'd; been with you still by day;
 Seen you to bed; set spies upon us all——

DOUGLAS.

What dreams are these!——

FLEMING.

For heaven's sake my Lord!——

DOUGLAS.

Were any that belong to me deny'd
 Access to speak their mind? Could he divine
 Civility would thus be deem'd deceit,
 Respect, a cover to such black designs?
 And complaisance a crime? I blush to think

His hospitality is thus requited.
 Too oft it is the fate of men of rank,
 To have about them those who blow the coals
 Of discord, and rekindle antient feuds.
 No doubt they have their private ends in view.
 How could they else, in spite of all the charms
 Of peace, and social virtue, bar the way
 To reconciliation? Thus to speak to one
 Whose principles I know, his worth approve,
 Must give me pain—I'm really at a loss
 For words to speak my wonder—How my friend,
 Are you the dupe of such unmanly fears!

FLEMING,

Bear witness heav'n! with what regrate I saw
 The sad necessity of such a charge;
 His time of life, and high pretence to virtue,
 Ill suit with such designs—I may be wrong—
 At least, my Lord, propose but to return;
 Perhaps the bare pretence may lay him open.

DOUGLAS.

I never will propose what I intend not!
 For you sir Malcom, since you apprehend
 I know not what of danger, I dispense
 With your attendance—Be the peril mine!

FLEMING.

I urge the thing no more—What I have said,
 Was the result of love and just respect.
 It never shall be said I stay'd behind,
 Or turn'd my back upon Lord Douglas' foes.
 My safety, heav'n can witness! never cost
 A moment's thought—But if you will proceed,
 At least permit Lord David to return.

The EARL of DOUGLAS,

The prudent counsel of your noble father,
You must remember, "Never both to go
Into a place, you could not call your own."

DOUGLAS.

I will not taint his mind with such suspicions.

FLEMING.

Yet, let me beg my Lord——

DOUGLAS.

I'll hear no more!——

[*Exit Fleming.*]

SCENE IV.

DOUGLAS, CRICHTON.

DOUGLAS.

MY Lord, I look upon you as my friend,
As such, with honest freedom speak your mind.
Say, for your years and wisdom may explain,
What seems to me mysterious, why am I
So much the subject of licentious tongues?
'Tis strange! 'tis wondrous strange! that I alone
Of all the great, unconscious of offence,
Should be the mark of slander and reproach.

CRICHTON.

Censorious tongues are never at a loss;
Rather than want a handle to revile;
The most indifferent actions they impute
To evil meaning. Their malignant aim
Skulks under fair pretence, and honey'd words.
They ever and anon profess regard
For those they mean to stab—But let them say;
Happy the man, who self-approv'd can hear

The murmuring voice of envy undisturb'd.
Slander too gross defeats the very end
The authors have in view; a lie must have
Of truth the semblance, or it can't deceive.
Indeed, my Lord, the numbers you retain,
By malice multiply'd, above the truth,
Afford your foes a plausible pretence,
To say, you mean to over-awe the State;
Two thousand men your enemies give out,
Are not unusual in Lord Douglas' train.
I think it can't be true; th' enormous charge
Of such attendance, soon would drain a prince.

DOUGLAS.

My Lord, I cannot contradict the fact,
If vassals, friends, and servants you include.
The base design infer'd, I must disclaim,
As from my thought remote, and false as hell.
The bounty of their princes hath bestow'd
Upon my ancestors a large estate;
Their frequent publick trusts hath still enlarg'd
The circle of their friends; these not ungrateful,
Full oft attend me, when I could dispense
With vain parrade, that never gave me joy.
Ev'n now, had my intent to come to town
Been known, a thousand had been here unbid.
With some, 'tis compliment, in others duty.
The former to refuse, the world would think
Th' effect of sullen pride, or sordid gloom;
Still to excuse the latter might be deem'd
A passing from my right—I ever thought
That men of rank and fortune should disdain

Th' unsocial turn, which marks the vulgar soul.
 To hoard an useless treasure, and to gorge
 Unnumber'd acres, at the high expence
 Of ev'ry virtue, social and divine,
 To me appears a wretched choice indeed!
 I mean not to exceed the bounds prescrib'd
 By prudence, and in riot to consume
 The fortune of my fathers; but to add,
 Still lands to lands, and eagerly to grasp
 At all I have not, were as mad, as vain,
 As if a hungry wretch refus'd to eat
 The bread he had, yet cried aloud for more.

CRICHTON.

'Tis justly said, my Lord: what we enjoy
 Is all we have: without a soul to use,
 The goods of fortune, like a fleeting dream,
 But tantalize the fancy, and expose
 Their wretched owners to a world of ills.
 The fordid mind in midst of plenty pines,
 Nor tastes with relish what the liberal hand
 Of heav'n bestows. Alone intent to heap,
 The pleasures which from social virtue flow
 Affect it not; corroding care and gloom
 Fill up the whole of its unhallow'd hours.
 Once more, my Lord, and I have done, 'tis said,
 That knighthood you confer, the antient right,
 The envy'd right of sovereign pow'r alone.

DOUGLAS.

I do: that right my ancestors enjoy'd.
 Such pow'r, however envy'd, all confests,
 A sovereign prince may give. Discreetly us'd,
 No ill effects can flow from such a grant.

CRICHTON.

Long may Lord Douglas thus assert his right,
And grace the title he so justly bears.

Mean time, my Lord, the posting fun invites
To prosecute our journey.

DOUGLAS.

I, my Lord;

Will instantly attend you.

CRICHTON.

Then we go. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

*Douglas - Castle.*Lady BEATRIX *sola*, a note in her hand.

'TIS Fleming's hand—(reads) "*This morning we set out from Crichton-Castle for Edinburgh—since we have been here, many circumstances have induced me to believe, that some wicked design is carrying on between the ministers against my Lord—I have in vain endeavoured to alarm him—time permits not further particulars—I have sworn the bearer to make dispatch—may heav'n disappoint my fears!*"

"Angels and ministers of grace defend him!"—

Going out, meets Lord WILLIAM, and returns.

Read that my Lord, and tremble for your friend!

Lord WILLIAM, *after reading the note.*

Perdition seize the villains! dare they hope

To hurt my Lord of Douglas, and to live?

Lady BEATRIX.

What dare not wicked men, of pow'r possess?

O fly my cousin! fly to their relief!

My friend! my guardian! ev'ry tender name

Would be too little for the man that saves—

Lord Douglas, and his brother—

Lord WILLIAM,

That shall I,

Or perish in th' attempt—

Lady BEATRIX.

Heav'n lend its aid!

Enter Grame.

Lady BEATRIX, *to Grame.*

Alas my cousin! had your advice prevail'd,

My brothers had not thus—

GRAME.

Ha! what of them?

Lady BEATRIX.

This from sir Malcom—(*giving him the note*)

(*a short pause*)

GRAME.

'Tis what I always fear'd

I've liv'd too long to be surpriz'd at aught.

Enter a Servant.

Lord WILLIAM, *to the Servant.*

Straight let a thousand men be summon'd here,

Each with his horse and armour; men of mettle,

Who will not shrink at danger—On thy life!

Let all be here before to-morrow's sun. [*Exit Servant.*

Lady BEATRIX.

Down down my heart!—This is a time for action,
A female tear will not divert the storm.

GRAME, to Lord William.

Alas my Lord! you think not of the danger,
That must attend so rash an enterprize;
The danger, not your own, I know you fear not,
But to the noble friends you mean to serve.
Unarm'd, and unattended as they are,
Perhaps their generous confidence may turn
Aside the wicked purpose of their foes,
Whate'er it is. But should a hostile band,
Approach the capital, you on their head,
I dread the consequence!—The States alarm'd,
Might rashly judge Lord Douglas had contriv'd
This plan, to forward some undue attempt;
Perhaps on that presumption!—O forbear,
Your friends are in their power, to urge their fate!

Lord WILLIAM.

I would not, heav'n can witness! But to stay
Inactive here, Lord Douglas' life in danger,
Can honour dictate? Could my friend approve?
What would you else propose? I'll patient hear
For wisdom is in age.

GRAME.

That you, my Lord,
Should countermand the orders you have giv'n,
And only send a chosen friend to town,
To learn the truth of things; then coolly act
As prudence may suggest.

Lord WILLIAM.

How can I thus——

Lady BEATRIX.

I do approve our cousin's cool advice,
And beg it may be follow'd, think, my Lord,
How strong the reasons he has urg'd; how dire
The consequence he fears!

Lord WILLIAM.

Thus far I yield,
To wait till a return from Fleming shews
The ground of his suspicions. If my Lord
Enjoys his freedom, and was well receiv'd,
Then I'm their friend——But if his life or liberty
Shall be attempted, hear and help me heav'n!
As I with unremitting zeal pursue
The just revenge of innocence betray'd.

[Exit.

GRAME.

O what a world is this!—Where righteous heav'n
Can innocence be safe?—O why prevail
The slaves of vice o'er virtue's free born sons!

[Exeunt.

The End of the fourth ACT.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Edinburgh - Castle.

CRICHTON, LIVINGSTON.

In close conference.

CRICHTON.

HOW deep are his designs! The artful youth,
 Talks much of virtue; with a smiling brow,
 And soft engaging manner, stoops to hear
 The plaints of all about him; mildly checks
 The guilty, and affects to feel the pain
 Of the distress'd—Insuperable pride,
 Restrain'd by policy, thus eggs him on
 To acts of seeming greatness——Why, my Lord?
 But to supplant his Sovereign in the love
 And just respect, which nature and the laws
 Have mark'd his own.

LIVINGSTON.

But if in durance kept,
 They cannot hurt the State—— Thus far I think,
 That popular pretence the publick good,
 May bear us out; but to attempt his life,
 His friend's, his brother's too, to me, my Lord,
 Seems full of danger.

CRICHTON.

Is the danger less
 To us, and to the State, while Douglas lives?
 As heav'n hath put them in our hand, my Lord,
 Their fate should be the same—All are the foes

Of us and of the State.

LIVINGSTON.

Lord David's youth—

CRICHTON.

The prudent gard'ner crops the noxious weed,
Before it blows. This great revenge will cow
The heart of faction: meaner foes will dread
To lift their tongue against us.

LIVINGSTON.

Still my Lord,
The world will think their doom severe, their friends
Will raise the publick cry—The States alarm'd,
May judge it prudent to abridge our pow'r.

CRICHTON.

If ev'ry danger possible be fear'd,
Adieu to action! like a frozen plant
We stand and perish—They or we must fall!

LIVINGSTON.

Theirs be the lot! I plead their cause no more.

CRICHTON.

Then we're agreed my Lord—The try'd Monteith
Must instantly be call'd—A trusty guard
Plac'd at the gate—A warrant must be wrote,
Sign'd, seal'd, and sent the Captain of the guard—
Lord Douglas with his brother, and their friend,
Now make the circuit of the castle walls,
Ere they return, these orders must be given.

[Exit Crichton.]

Manet LIVINGSTON.

How Angus fir'd when I gave distant hints
Of what we had in view—My courage fell,
And but for Kirkton's hint, "Beware a Douglas"

Had stood a coward confest—From Abercorn,
 Slow and inactive, nothing's to be fear'd—
 Young Abercorn, Angus, and Dalkeith,
 May storm a little—Be it so—Our pow'r,
 That blest pretence the publick-good, at last
 Must carry all before them—Still I feel
 The woman in my heart—Conscience no more!—
 The thought that favours Douglas is a lie! [Exit.

S C E N E II.

The KING, LIVINGSTON, CRICHTON,
 DOUGLAS, Lord DAVID. *At Dinner.*

The KING.

INDEED my noble cousins you've been unkind,
 To stay so long from court.

DOUGLAS.

My royal Liege,

Your highness shall not need again to blame

The same neglect in us.

The KING.

Well then my Lord,

On that condition I forgive the past.

CRICHTON.

My Liege, your royal ancestors have ow'd

The greatest obligations to his house:

Still forward to oppose their country's foes,

And ever ready to support the rights

Of Scotland and its friends.

The EARL of DOUGLAS,

The KING.

'Tis true my Lord.

I've often heard the Queen my mother say,
That Douglas was my friend, and talk of wrongs
She thought he could redress, were he at court.

CRICHTON, (*aside to Livingston*)
Mark that my Lord!—

LIVINGSTON.

Thus children tell the truth—(*aside*)
My Lord, the kings of Scotland have not been
Unmindful of the house of Douglas' worth.
'The bounty of the prince is ill repaid,
If each repeated act does not encrease
The subject's love. Obedience is a claim
To which ungenerous princes have a right,
How deeply founded his, whose high rewards,
Make interest and duty coincide?
What could a prince bestow, except his crown,
Which hath not been, with liberal hand, bestow'd
Upon the house of Douglas, by our kings?

DOUGLAS.

My Lord, if I mistake not, your discourse
Obliquely glanceth on my fathers fame—

LIVINGSTON.

What if it did!—Perhaps I meant it should!—

DOUGLAS.

Forgive the boast, my house hath never stain'd
The honours which it won, nor lurk'd at home,
When Scotland's danger call'd it to the field.

CRICHTON.

If some deserv'd them, others have abus'd
The favour of their prince, and strove to rise

Above a subject's rank; to awe the State,
And trample on the pow'r to which they ow'd
Such obligations as could ne'er be paid.

DOUGLAS.

If any of them——

CRICHTON.

If!—Presumptuous youth!
That *if* implies a doubt of what I say!

DOUGLAS.

Was it for this, my Lord, you brought us here?
'Tis mean! thus to insult me, in a presence
Where common decency forbids resentment.

LIVINGSTON, *whispers to a Servant.*

The KING.

My lords, you grieve my cousins. Let me beg——

*Enter a Servant with a Bull's Head on a Dish, which
he sets on the Table before Douglas.*

DOUGLAS, *rising in haste.*

Is this the welcome, kings give to their guests!—
What have I done my Liege to merit death?

*Several armed Men rush into the Room and lay hold of
Douglas and Lord David.*

The KING.

Good heav'n! where am I!—Villains touch them not!
(*The Fellows seem indetermin'd*)

CRICHTON.

Slaves! do your duty, or by heav'n you die!
Bind fast their arms, and instant bear them hence.

LIVINGSTON.

Away with them to death!

The EARL of DOUGLAS,

CRICHTON.

To instant death!—

The KING.

To death my lords!—Alas! what have they done?—

CRICHTON.

The tale's too long, your highness yet too young,
 To comprehend the blackness of their crimes;
 Hereafter you, and all the world shall know,
 How justly they deserv'd the fate they meet—
 Bear hence the traitors!—

DOUGLAS.

Traitors dost thou say!

Thou hollow hearted statesman! if thy soul
 Knows aught of virtue, scorn to give a name
 Thy conscience stamps a lie! full in thy teeth
 I throw the vile aspersion!—To my prince,
 My country, and its laws, a faithful friend,
 Here, in my sovereign's presence, I defy thee!
 False as thou art, to thee I dare appeal,
 Say, had my deeds been foul, my views dishonest,
 Could I have trusted thee, slept at thy house
 Two nights, and brought my only brother there?
 In spite of all my warmest friends could say,
 I thought thee honest, fearless enter'd here
 Where none can help me; brought my brother too!
 O faith! O virtue! whither are ye fled!

LIVINGSTON, (*to Crichton*)

My Lord! I wonder you can bear him thus—

DOUGLAS.

Is then the publick-faith on which I came,
 Of no account with thee? Is there a man

So lost to honour, virtue, all that's good?

LIVINGSTON.

The publick-faith in common cafes binds,
But cannot, where th' observance would produce
A greater ill than from its breach can flow.

DOUGLAS.

Alas! my country! what hast thou to fear,
From men who blush not, coolly to avow
Such principles as these!

CRICHTON.

Slaves bear them hence!—

The KING.

For heav'n's sake, my lords, untie their hands;
You cannot mean to kill them—On my knees
I'll beg their life. (*offers to kneel*) Or will you kill me too?

LIVINGSTON.

Was ever royalty so low disgrac'd!
Your highness need not, must not interfere,
They both shall die, before the sun goes down.

CRICHTON.

No favour they deserve, and none shall have!

DOUGLAS.

I scorn thy favour! Let but justice speak——
What have I done? What deed of mine can warrant
The odious appellation thou hast giv'n?
Thy pow'r may finish, what thy craft begun,
And let it!—'Tis the lot of man to die!
But canst thou hope the world will be deceiv'd
By vile pretence, or e'er approve a deed
Subversive of the common faith which binds
Society together?

CRICHTON.

Enough to thee,
Thy deeds are tried, thy final sentence past;
Thine, and thy father's crimes together weigh'd,
Have sunk thee in the scale of equity.
The world I mind not, let it blame the deed,
Yet shall it not prevent it—Thou shalt die——

DOUGLAS.

I sue not for my life, nor would I live,
On terms so base——Admit my crimes are great,
What hath this child done? How hath he deserv'd
A sentence so severe?—for him I sue,
For him I'll humbly kneel, O save my brother!
Whose generous nature ne'er offended man.

Lord DAVID.

No my good lords, I care not to outlive
So kind a brother—Tho' I'm but a child,
I'll think myself a man, and die like him,
If you permit—Indulge my first request.

CRICHTON.

Thy suit is granted. Would thou wert the last,
Of thy detested name!

The KING.

Alas! my Lord,

You will not kill the child because he bears
A name you like not. I have often heard
That mercy is a virtue which exalts
The throne of princes. In my tender years,
Stain not my crown with blood. O think my Lord!
Your little son stood there—How would you plead,
Were I so cruel——

CRICHTON.

Cease my Liege to urge
A suit against yourself. My son in vain
Should plead for mercy, were his guilt like theirs.

The KING.

You ask'd me to invite them here to dine;
Why make me an accomplice?

LIVINGSTON, (*aside.*)

How he talks!

CRICHTON.

By heav'n they die! When you assume the reins
Of government, we humbly bend our wills
To your opinion, but till then must act
As prudence shall suggest. Leave to the mob,
This vulgar pity; 'tis below a prince;
It is a weakness that divests the soul
Of all that's great and manly.

The KING.

Ah! my Lord,
It is a pleasing weakness, I could die
To save my cousins——see my Lord he cries!——

DOUGLAS.

Your generous sympathy, my prince, excites
The grateful tear, I weep not for myself;
Thus let me thank you——Blasted be the tongue
That e'er imputes the wrongs we meet to you.

The KING, (*to Crichton*)

Am I your King, and yet must plead in vain?

CRICHTON.

No more, my Liege!——Your weakness moves me not——

DOUGLAS.

Unfeeling monster!——Canst thou be a man,

Yet see unmov'd a scene of such distress?—
 Come then my brother!—Welcome the will of heav'n!
 Which orders all things for the best, and draws
 From seeming evils, oft the greatest good.
 Once we must die, and if in youth or age,
 Is but a trifle——My royal Liege farewell!——
 May heav'n protect you from your faithless friends,
 And bless you with a long and happy reign!——

The KING, (*covering his face*)
 Farewel my noble cousins!—I cannot save you!—

[*Exeunt Douglas and Lord David guarded*]

LIVINGSTON.

For shame! my Liege, how can you mourn the fate
 Of traitors, who would pull you from the throne?
 While they're alive, you cannot reign secure,
 Your sacred life depends upon their fall.

CRICHTON.

Weep not my Liege, we only mean you good,
 And at the peril of our all, have done
 This deed to keep the crown upon your head,

The KING.

Alas my lords! the crown has cost me dear!
 For it I lost my father, basely slain,
 For it became a stranger to my mother,
 To all my friends!——And now my cousins die
 That I may wear it——Dear pre-eminence!

LIVINGSTON.

Grieve not my Liege, you know not yet the charms,
 Of sovereign pow'r, or it would give you joy,
 To think that you had servants who would go
 Such lengths to serve you, and to save the State.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

The Outter-Court of the Castle--A Scaffold covered with black Cloth.

DOUGLAS, LORD DAVID, MACKRA, OFFICER, GUARDS.

MACKRA.

THE charity of the good Lord Chancellor
Sends me to your assistance.

DOUGLAS.

It was kind.

You're welcome father!

MACKRA.

Since about to pay

The debt you owe to nature and the law,
All the amends you now can make the world,
Is to confess your crimes, and humbly own
Your sentence just.

DOUGLAS.

I owe not this to truth.

To own the sentence past upon me just,
Would wrong my conscience which condemns me not,
The errors of my life, I humbly hope,
Will be forgiv'n; if any I have wrong'd,
'Twas what I meant not; if I e'er let slip
Occasion to do good, or pow'r abus'd,
I heartily regrave it. Man at best
Is weak, and much unequal to the part
He has to act; and if in youth he errs,

H

The good will pity, where they can't approve.

MACKRA.

Such general acknowledgements fall short
Of what to heav'n is due, and what to man.
Your crimes against the State you must confess,
If you would hope forgiveness.

DOUGLAS.

Let me ask,

What crime against the State have I committed?

MACKRA.

Thy crimes against the State, so foul, so many,
Would any mouth defile, besides thine own;
Thy conscience is erroneous, or thy tongue
Gives not its verdict. Hadst thou not been guilty,
Would men so fam'd for clemency and justice,
Have sent thee hither?—Hence thy guilt is plain.

DOUGLAS.

Forgive me father, if I say you want
That charity, your Master hath affirm'd
The genuine mark of Christians. Thus to judge—

MACKRA.

Bold man! dost thou not know the reverence due
The minister of heav'n?

DOUGLAS.

Thou grave reproach!

To virtue and religion, which disclaim thee,
Dost thou assume that venerable title?
'Tis charity's celestial flame that marks
The friend of virtue, and the priest rever'd.
Get thee to him that sent thee! much he needs
Thy courtly aid, to cheer his guilty soul.

MACKRA.

Once more, unhappy mortal I adjure thee
To speak the truth, and own thy sentence just.
If not, the pow'r on me by heav'n conferr'd,
I must employ to sink thy soul to hell.

DOUGLAS.

Fear'st thou not him, who fees thy heart and mine!—
For his sake I beseech thee, let me die
In peace and charity.

MACKRA.

Sleep on secure,
Till flames awake thee!

DOUGLAS.

When like me thou stand'st
Upon the brink of time, may heav'n afford!
Thy soul, that comfort thou with-hold'st from me.

[Exit Mackra.]

SCENE IV.

*Enter FLEMING guarded, who stops short on
seeing DOUGLAS and Lord DAVID.*

FLEMING.

O SIGHT of horror! to behold those hands,
So oft extended to relieve the wretched,
Thus like a felon's bound!—

DOUGLAS, *turning hastily about.*

What voice is that!

Ha! Fleming too!—Where will their malice end!
What hast thou done, thou best of men and friends!

To merit such a fate?—O grief on grief!—

FLEMING.

I've lov'd and serv'd Lord Douglas as I ought,
From gratitude and duty. More than this,
I think, the conscience of my judges knows
I have not done, to merit the respect
They put upon me; thus to let me die;
With those I would not chuse to live behind.

DOUGLAS.

A cruel favour!—'twas to stab me deeper
They sent thee hither—— Welcome to my heart!
My arms are bound, but my affections free—
O had I listen'd to thy words of truth!
Mine eyes had ne'er beheld so sad a scene!
My only brother! and my faithful friend!
Fall by my folly!—

FLEMING.

Talk not thus my Lord;

Forget the past; had righteous heav'n seen meet,
This snare you had escap'd; since it permits,
With dignity support your lot, and die
Greatly as you have liv'd. To die my Lord!
What is it? but to bear a moment's pain,
And bid a long adieu to this poor spot,
Where vice and error reign: to burst the shell
Which locks us up in matter, and to move
Free and unbounded through the works of God!

DOUGLAS.

I would not wish to shame my fathers blood,
By vulgar fear, nor is there aught in death
So terrible, as parting with my friends.
My sister! O my sister!—How can she

Support the loss? The death of those we love,
 Affects the soul with many a grating pang,
 Above the reach of language to express!
 Not joyless age, nor keen distress can loose
 The sympathetick tie, or cool the love
 Which warms the breast of friends. To part! to die!
 No more to hear the soothing voice that charms
 The woes, the cares of human life to rest!
 No more to taste the genuine joy that flows
 From breast to breast, to fan the holy flame
 Of social love and friendship—O my friend!
 Thou know'st the pang thy heart was made to feel!

FLEMING.

The friends of virtue part but for a moment:
 The parting tide of life alone divides,
 But half divides them: the unbounded soul
 Outflies the lightning, shoots beyond the stars,
 And tastes, in vision, their eternal feast,
 Who first shake off the cumbrous load of clay.

DOUGLAS.

Poor Grame! thou good old man, what griefs are thine!
 Severely disciplin'd in virtue's school,
 Thy soul, tho' tender, may support the shock.
 But O my sister! hapless, virtuous maid!
 For thee I feel, for thee the poignant tear
 Swells in my eye—in spight of manhood flows!—

FLEMING.

Rejoice my Lord, to gain your native skies!
 And leave your sister to the care of heav'n.
 Methinks I see your great fore-fathers stand
 With open arms, upon the happy shore,
 To give you welcome—O the shining throng!

That pours upon my soul!—We come! we come!
Ye glorious sons of liberty we come!—

DOUGLAS.

Adieu the world! my friends! to all below!
The charm's dissolv'd! and now I pant for bliss!
Blest liberty! with thee they live—We come!
Who would not die to grasp thee to his heart!

FLEMING.

For liberty, your house hath often bled;
For liberty despis'd the love of life;
For liberty you die, these faithless men
With jealous eye beheld your opening worth,
And fear'd the just reward of their misrule.
Fear not your fame, for every generous heart
Must execrate the deed: nor fear your house
With you shall fall: these impious men shall live
In just contempt, till heav'n avenge their crimes.
Your family, so long the care of heav'n,
Again shall flourish; future kings shall boast
The blood of Douglas. Yonder lucid orb
A meaner planet may eclipse, but soon
He bursts with greater glory on the eye,
Relumes the arch of heav'n, and shines serene.

OFFICER.

Your time to live, my Lord, is nearly gone.

DOUGLAS.

I know it, sir, and quickly shall have done—

(turning to Fleming and embracing him)

Farewell! my faithful counsellor, and friend!—
We soon shall meet again, to part no more!—

FLEMING.

Till then, my dearest Lord!—Till then, farewell!—

Lord DAVID, *embracing Fleming.*

Farewel! fir Malcom!—'Tis a dismal hour!—

FLEMING.

Farewel! sweet youth!—Have courage for a moment,
And these dark clouds will usher in the day!—

[Fleming retires to a corner of the Stage.]

DOUGLAS, *making up to Lord David.*

And now my brother!—the world's to us no more!—
This heav'n permits, and providence is wise!—
My friend!—my brother!—a last!—a kind embrace!—
If our remembrance reach to future times,
Let it be told, I ask no other fame,
We liv'd as brothers, and like brothers died!—

Lord DAVID.

Farewel! my Lord!—Will death be very painful?

DOUGLAS.

No my sweet child! 'tis but a moment's pain.

(turning to the Officer of the guard)

I ne'er oblig'd you fir—Yet give me leave
To ask a favour—When we are no more,
I beg you'll see our bodies laid in earth.
A little spot will hold them; lay us all
Together in a grave—I have a sister,
May thank you for your charitable care.
If e'er you see her, fir,—Perhaps you may—
Bid her remember well my parting words.
Tell her, it was the very sting of death
To leave her, weak and helpless as she is,
In such a world, where virtue and her friends
Must bear so much. But bid her call to mind
The stock from whence she sprung, so often tried

In various fortune; and reject with scorn,
 Whate'er might shame the noble pride of virtue.
 Bid her forgive the wrongs we meet; nor charge
 Unerring wisdom rashly. Born to die,
 The time, the place, the manner, are to man
 Of small importance; if in death his heart
 Reproach him not with having liv'd in vain.

OFFICER.

My orders are, to see your corps interr'd
 In decent manner, ere I leave the place;
 Depend upon my care. Your other charge,
 Should an occasion offer, ev'ry word
 I'll faithfully relate——Deep in my mind
 They are engrav'd; and never can wear out.

DOUGLAS.

Then we are ready!——

*(Douglas and Lord David retire to different corners
 of the Stage, and the Officer gives a signal to the Exe-
 cutioner, who enters with an Ax in his Hand)*

EXECUTIONER, kneeling.

On my knees my Lord,
 I humbly ask forgiveness at your hands.

DOUGLAS.

Thou never wrong'dst me friend—Accept of this,
 'Tis all I have, *(gives money)* and fearless do thy office,
 When I shall drop my glove.

Lord DAVID, to the Executioner.

Take this of me—*(gives money)*
 When I stretch out my arm, I wish to die.

FLEMING, *giving money.*

When I shall drop my handkerchief—Take care!
And see thou strike not till the signs are giv'n.

DOUGLAS, *embracing Lord David,
and Fleming.*

O could we die at once!—

FLEMING.

First let me die!—

LORD DAVID.

O leave not me my Lord!—

DOUGLAS.

I will not long!—

Our friend shall bring thee with him—Think of heav'n!
Forgive thine enemies!—and blefs thy friends!—
My friend!—my brother!—the world! and time adieu!

[*Here the Curtain falls*]

*After a Piece of solemn Musick is performed, the Cur-
tain is again drawn up.*

I. AFTER-SCENE.

LIVINGSTON, Lady LIVINGSTON, MON-
TEITH.

LIVINGSTON, *to Monteith.*

HOW did the guards behave?

MONTEITH.

In silence deep

They hung their heads; and when the pris'ners died,
The bursting tear broke loose from ev'ry eye.

LIVINGSTON.

The vulgar still regrate the stroke of justice.

Lady LIVINGSTON.

Humanity must feel the stroke of death,
And in the fatal hour forgets the crime.

LIVINGSTON.

'Tis disaffection, impious discontent!—
And how their officer?—You ey'd him close?

MONTEITH.

Extremely grave, and often wip'd his eyes—
He talk'd, my Lord—O I shall ne'er forget—

LIVINGSTON.

Who talk'd!—

MONTEITH.

Lord Douglas. Never mortal died—

LIVINGSTON.

Perdition seize thee villain! dost thou speak
To me of Douglas?—Hence! and learn to dread
That pow'r by which he fell!—

[*Exit Monteith.*]

Lady LIVINGSTON.

What means my Lord!

LIVINGSTON.

Their officer!—a wretch I lately rais'd—
A woman hearted soldier, stain to arms,
But, by the soul of Bruce! the poltroon dies!—

Lady LIVINGSTON.

O talk not thus my Lord!—Advance in rank,
The man whose generous sympathy gives proof
Of genuine courage and a manly heart.

LIVINGSTON.

Ha! traitrefs! say, thou'lt join th' unthinking crowd,
To reprobate the deed which I have done!—

Lady LIVINGSTON.

I would, could that undo it!— I affirm
The deed dishonest, and my soul detests it!
I knew thy soul was base, thou know'st how oft
I strove to touch it with the love of virtue;
But hence, no more I urge thee to be honest,
So foul a crime excludes thee from my heart!
Last night, when superstition push'd thee on,
O shameful weakness! to consult a witch,
'Twas I that represented her; in pity,
I interpos'd between thy soul and hell.

LIVINGSTON.

If so, thou art a devil, for mortal ear
Heard not a whisper of my close design.

Lady LIVINGSTON.

I over-heard thee mention Kirkton's name,
And from thy temper, guess'd thy mean intent;
I watch'd thee close, and saw the low disguise,
Meanly assum'd to cover thy disgrace.

LIVINGSTON.

Then thou hast rashly push'd me on to that
Which now thou blam'st. I doubted in my self,
If better, still to live in anxious dread,
Or thus at once, to rid me of my foe.
Thy words of dark import—"Beware a Douglas,"
Believ'd oraculous, alarm'd my soul.

Lady LIVINGSTON.

Had I not reason, thus to caution thee?
I knew thy spight to that respected house;
What thou had'st done against it; and fore-saw
That thou would'st fall before it—fall thou must,

Crimes of so deep a die cannot escape

The wrath of heav'n——

LIVINGSTON.

Cease thy abusive tongue.

I hold thee now no prophetess, nor mind

Thy idle words.

Lady LIVINGSTON.

O that I had fore-known,

The wicked purpose thou had'st then in view!

Perhaps the threats of such a wretch had done,

What conscience, honour, virtue tried in vain.

Suppose thy craft and pow'r elude the lash

Of human laws—*Remember an hereafter!*

[Exit Lady Livingston.]

Manet LIVINGSTON.

Scarce could I bear the shock—Her biting words

Stung like a scorpion——'Tis over now,—

Whate'er the consequence, it must be born—

'Tis strange! Monteith's unfeeling heart was mov'd,

The guards, their Captain wept—What then am I?

"Remember an hereafter"—There's the thorn!

(A Bell tolls, Livingston listens, starts, and looks wildly about.)

The passing bell of some departed soul!——

Solemn and awful sound! thou speak'st to me——

Thou speak'st to all!—Perhaps in pride of life,

At noon this mortal dream'd of future years,

Unconscious of the gathering cloud of fate,

Now burst upon him——(*seems thoughtful*)

SCENE II.

CRICHTON, LIVINGSTON.

CRICHTON.

GIVE you joy, my Lord!
 Of the deliverance—This stretch of pow'r
 The world will loudly blame; that we must bear,
 And can, if both unite; on this depends
 Our lives, our fortunes, all we hope or fear.
 I blush to own, that jealousies and doubts,
 The whispers of designing men, the voice
 Of busy faction, hath too often broke
 The sacred tie of friendship and expos'd
 Us and the State to danger. Hence be doubt
 Of one another banish'd. On the faith
 Of men and christians, let us jointly swear,
 To stand or fall together—Witness heaven!—

LIVINGSTON.

Heav'n is not of our party—*Blood for blood.*

CRICHTON.

What means my Lord!—

LIVINGSTON, *taking no notice of Crichton.*

"Hereafter—ay hereafter"—

Ha! thither move their corps!—Let me observe
 The poor procession—Not a friend to mourn!—
 No blazon'd ensigns!—No inscription boasts
 A long descent!—Not even a servant here!—
 O greatness! greatness!—vanity! and dust!—
 Here lay them down a while—This, this was Douglas!—
 Where now the sparkling eye, the rosy cheek,

The ruddy lip?—Pale! hideous! all besmear'd
 With blood and dust!—To-morrow, and to-morrow,—
 And then another comes——And last of all,
 Death and a long account!——O save me heav'n!
 The ghost of Douglas, awfully serene,
 Hath fix'd its eyes upon me!—Now it frowns:
 Then shoots its piercing eye through all my frame,
 Points to the headless trunk, and smiles contempt!—
 'Tis gone! it soars aloft!——

CRICHTON, (*aside*)

While reason sleeps,
 Thus, ever-waking fancy to the mind
 Presents her magick glass—Distorted forms,
 Hobgoblins, elves, pale fear, and blooming hope,
 In wild succession pass—Mean while the soul,
 Or grasps at shadows, or as vainly starts
 At unsubstantial ills. Indulg'd too long,
 These superstitious fancies cloud the mind;
 Absorb the flame of reason, and involve
 The soul in darkness. If he thus should talk——
 [*A soft knock at the door, Livingston looks wildly about*]

Enter a Servant.

SERVANT.

The King, my lords, complains he is not well;
 And cries incessantly, Thrown on his couch,
 He often calls on Douglas; beats his breast;
 Then lifts his eyes to heav'n and wrings his hands,

LIVINGSTON.

His guiltless hands! O heav'n were mine as pure!—

CRICHTON, *to the Servant.*

Fellow retire!—I'll wait upon the King.

[*Exit Servant.*]

My Lord you dream! or if awake, give hints
Of what I ne'er suspected.

LIVINGSTON.

Hints, my Lord!—

CRICHTON.

If Douglas justly fell, to you the State
Owes the deliverance. If your private views
Have push'd you on to this—

LIVINGSTON.

O heav'n and earth!—

CRICHTON.

Those exclamations pass for nought, my Lord,
Who sign'd the warrant? Who in pow'r supreme
Directed every step? Who in the house
Accus'd my Lord of Douglas?

LIVINGSTON.

Satan blush!

And own thy self outdone, nor more pretend
Superior craft, or impudence to man.

Thy wretched tool I was, tho' first in pow'r:

This well thou know'st—

CRICHTON.

Some rest may do you good,

Your late disorder is not quite gone off.

[Exit Crichton.]

Manet LIVINGSTON.

Thus have I lost my peace!—Alas for what?

Delusive dreams, air bubbles that arise

Upon the varying wave of fancy's sea—

Farewel! my flatt'ring hopes—What right have I

To look for truth in him, myself so false.

O curst ambition! whither hast thou led?

To guilt! to horror! these are thy rewards!
 I dread to be alone!—O conscience! conscience!
 Thou gloomy tyrant of the guilty mind,
 Where can I fly from thee, or how divert
 Thy dire fore-bodings?—O the happy days!
 When thou with gentle voice lull'd me to rest,
 And made my slumbers sweet—Alas how chang'd!
 Nor future days nor nights have joys for me!

[Exit.

SCENE III.

Douglas's House in Edinburgh.

LENOX *solus.*

ETERNAL curses blast the villain's name
 Who thus betray'd thee! hapless generous youth!
 Farewel society! farewel to government!
 To publick order, and to private peace,
 If such accumulated guilt escape
 Its due reward—It cannot: heav'n is just!—
 The very multitude abhor the deed;
 Ev'n now they throng the streets, in wild amaze,
 Each questioning his fellow, "Is it true!"
 And mutt'ring curses on the impious actors.
 O where's the spirit of our brave fore-fathers!
 When mushrooms such as these can bid defiance
 To law and justice——Scotland! how distrest!
 Thy King a child! thy noblest blood thus spilt,
 By impious men, who revel in thy spoils!—
 O what a wound hath publick faith receiv'd!
 What feuds must this nefarious deed produce!

Ye guardian Powr's to whom high Heav'n commits
The care of states, where are you? Why retir'd!—
Our crimes have driv'n you hence! O my poor country!
Impartial Judge! lift thine avenging arm!
Why should the sons of Belial thus prevail?—
But why complaint!—There is another world,
Where injur'd worth shall have a full amends.
Here, times may change, new factions rise and fall,
But sacred Virtue shall out-live them all.
Happy the man! that chuseth for his guide
This best conductress, by experience tried:
Whate'er befalls him, firm his mind remains,
Resign'd to bear what ruling-heav'n ordains:
Serene, tho' round him storms and tempests roar,
Secure of bliss, when time and chance are o'er.

K

[Exit.

The End of the Fifth ACT.

[The Note referred to in the last page.]

* * * That the *Chronicle* does not here say a
complaint to the family of Douglas, the reader may
be assisted, by turning to the first volume of *Rapin's*
History of England, the folio edition, page, 279
where, narrating the transactions of the year 1174
he tells us, that after *Edward* the first had reduced
Scotland to his obedience, he summoned the whole
nobility and officers of the kingdom to assemble at
Berwick, and swear fealty to him. The author adds
"Among the *Scottish* nobles *William Douglas* was
"the only person, that could never resolve to swear
"to a prince, who had no right to *Scotland*, but who
"force gave him. This refusal drew on him the indig-
"nation of *Edward*, who commanding him to be con-
"ducted to *England*, kept him in close confinement
"where he ended his days, without his misfortune
"being ever able to bring him to acknowledge *Ed-*
"ward for his sovereign."



This *William*, was the 7th Lord of Douglas, and the father
of *Good Sir James*. Vid. *Hume's History of the Houses of Douglas*
and *Angus*. Edition in 12mo Vol. 1st. page 30.

Errata.

Page 14, line 6. for *struck*, read *struck*. P. 41, l. 22, for *parra*
read *parade*.

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